



Shared Harvest Foodbank distributed emergency food boxes to 1,335 families Saturday at Fairfield High School. Officials say they extended the distribution event due to response. Around 60 Ohio National Guard and Army Reserve members assisted 20 staff and volunteers. E.L. HUBBARD / SHARED HARVEST FOODBANK

## Shared Harvest has record food distribution demand

Official says agency also needs donations to help replenish supply.

**By Michael D. Pitman**  
Staff Writer

FAIRFIELD — Shared Harvest Foodbank is distributing food at never-before-seen rates, said its executive director.

Executive Director Terry Perdue said his agency has distributed the same amount of food in two weeks that they historically would pass out in two months.

In their past few distributions, officials have seen record numbers of people seeking food, even before the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19. On Saturday at Fairfield High School,

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### BY THE NUMBERS

Here are some facts and figures after Saturday's Shared Harvest Foodbank distribution event at Fairfield High School:

**1,335** Families served

**60** Members of the Ohio National Guard and Army Reserve who assisted

**20** Staff and volunteers who assisted

**408** Shared Harvest's previous one-day mass distribution event record set in February



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## Distribution

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they served more than 3.5 times the number of families than they did in their then-record-setting February distribution event.

But Perdue was surprised they didn't get more than the 1,335 families that received emergency food supplies that included fresh, frozen and pantry items. They planned for 2,000 families to get meals.

"I think that people were overwhelmed by the number of cars and just turned away," he said. "I think people came and decided to leave because of the wait."

Perdue said officials are seeing people at these distribution events that never before needed food assistance.



In their past few distributions, Shared Harvest Foodbank officials have seen record numbers of people seeking food, even before the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19. On Saturday at Fairfield High School, they served more than 3.5 times the number of families than they did in their then-record-setting February distribution event. E.L. HUBBARD PHOTOS / SHARED HARVEST FOODBANK

About 60 Ohio National Guard and Army Reserve members assisted Saturday with 20 foodbank staff and volunteers.

Shared Harvest and 11 other foodbanks are distributing food at record rates since the novel coronavirus

outbreak, according to the Ohio Association of Foodbanks.

Perdue said Shared Harvest needs to replenish its supply at the same rate it's being distributed and are asking for donations. He expects the foodbank may need to



ask for monetary donations in order to purchase food.

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine said on Friday at his daily coronavirus press conference it's "very concerning" of the foodbanks' need.

"We have to make sure that the foodbanks have the food

that they need. It certainly is a priority," the governor said about the Foodbank.

Ohio Association of Foodbanks has made a plea for \$25 million in emergency funding as Executive Director Lisa Hamler-Fugitt told the Associated Press Ohio's 12 foodbanks are seeing between a 100 to 500 percent increase in demand for assistance.

"If you have enough, please make sure that your family, friends and neighbors have the food that they need," Hamler-Fugitt said to the Associated Press. "Hunger is just six doors away, and it looks a whole lot like you and me."

DeWine said on Friday his administration will "have something shortly" pertaining to that request.

Perdue said there is a "fair share allocation" when funds

are divided among Ohio's 12 foodbanks, which includes population, the number of people living in poverty, unemployment numbers, those receiving other benefits.

Perdue said if Shared Harvest doesn't replenish its supply at the same rate as it's leaving, they'll have to purchase food. While fresh and canned food is needed, vegetables are a need at the moment.

Shared Harvest will implement a door-step delivery to some who are in self-isolation and do not want to leave their homes. He said they're building a list of names and will likely launch that in about a week.

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